PANTA REMIX
Epistemology of Creative Practices
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Inside Sociology of Art the concept of social world identifies a network of people whose cooperative activity appears organized through their shared knowledge of conventional meanings and creative practices. Such network produces the types of pieces of art making possible for the art (social) world to represent itself (Becker, 1982). On the contrary, as example in antithesis to what just argued (*i.e.* the social character of the piece of art), during his lessons Howard Becker used to talk of a macro structure in Los Angeles' downtown built by a single man (cfr. Becker, 1998, p.13): the Watts Towers[].

It is a vertical facility born from the creative assemblage of Sabato Rodia, immigrated to the USA in 1917, who dedicated 34 years of lonely work to his masterpiece using just simple tools and many different materials to make grow 17 tall towers.

The assemblage work was made up of heterogeneous use of materials, reuse of maiolicas, bottle bottoms and other objects, as well the mixture of different artistic and decorative genres; that is a peculiar world born from the remix of stuff and campanian-californian cultural contamination done by this artist of Irpinia's origins[].

As real exception in the social theory of art Watts Towers may therefore represent also another borderline case inside art: even being the result of a single man work it is a creative act and reworking based on other creative acts, a remix of other former acts already denotated as creative, cultural, for short a result of human industry. The meaning of art work rises up properly from elements-agencies fused into a specific configuration as much local as heterogeneous making the artistic act part of reality. The main resonance of what said until now is in the invisible articulation work (Star & Strauss, 1999) of the heterogenous and contaminated work necessary to attribute meanigs to the processes of materialization (Barad, 2007). Such are the processes we live, we are part of and define, however, only in some cases as creative. The creative act depends neither on the origin of chosen materials, nor on the *status* formerly ascribed to those, but is what gets produced and in-formed by the process of *remixing* of matter and energy involving also human agents (the artist; the art critic; the public; the collector; the gallery director; *et ceteri..*).

When we modify even a minute portion of reality -and our perception of it (what was once something else is now an art work)- the creative act produces therefore knowledge too; is in itself a cognitive act that in-formes in such a way not only a certain configuration of matter, but gives meaning to what we perceive realizing hereafter the identity and the entanglement among agencies.

Therefore the consitution of the world takes place through a continuous construction and reworking of what already existing in order to re-constructing it as new and only then is possible to ascribe to it a new constitution.

Embrication, meshing up, contamination, hybridation are some of the possible adopted terms to describe this process which our minds -used to the rational sense and intellectual need of pureness, stainlessness, perfectness- perceive as abnormal and twisting the meaning produced by the continuous collective reconstruction of the world.

An easy example comes when talking about the classical canon of architecture and sculpture, thereinto something perceived as undoubtly pure, uncorrupted as a bronze statue of Poseidon, or a roman column, are instead configurations of reality given by the heterogeneous assemblage of myths, marmour, minerals, human strenght, pre and proto historical culture,.. Such configurations have been themselves local interpretations of something already seen and told by other women and men, already forged by hands and tools, already materialized otherwise, going backwards undoing the fabric of the groove of reality back to time T of *n* units reaching the first possible materializations known as star dusts...still a cosmic *remix* of matter-space-time-energy. Essentially even an hypotetic *intelligent designer* of the universe wouldn't have produced anything

else than a *remix*, just because the creation takes forthwith to a creator as part of the process of materialization of the universe itself (*remix fiat*). Hence r*emix* as production of reality.

Even technology, genetics and what else are not what unplugged from reality, but inasmuch themselves products of reality. Only then can be some of our stabilizing apparatuses of intervening in the world.

The appropriation of genetic codes as industrial patents, or the adscription of intellectual authorship of a work, are also themselves parts of the world even if the shared socioeconomical coordinates make them elevated to rational concepts disciplining and nominating the visible world.

Just in this way science and arts, meant as "historical configurations of material-discursive practices" (Rouse, 2002, p.93) work in a contiguous and continuum way constructing worlds (Goodman, 1978), working as laboratories of signified reality, therefore as strenghtening of the visible and nomological machines (Cartwright, 1999, p.49 e sgg.); it's only after using these epistemically vivid sieves that we can catch reality as something rational, scientific, esthetic,...beautiful,...useful...and necessary, or at least considerable of our attention and curiosity. At this point i would tend to consider *remix* not anymore as a *cultural maverick*, or a borderline case inside art, but:

a) as the practice of discursive materialization mankind have always adopted to progress, adapt the environment to their needs and harness it with other meanings than those provided by the instinctual apparatuses;

b) and it constitutes rightly the cultural *continuum* replicating information (Blackmore, 1999) and practices that make possible the tranistion in time and space of social order and knowledge as activity of demarcation between nature and culture.

The development of a social theory of information -that treats the comunicative dynamics and the material objects as the product of the properties of the architecture of situations in which are perceived as such (Garfinkel, 2008)- makes possible to explore in an innovative way the relation between informatics and creativity.

The virtual itself highlighted as form of enacted sharing makes visible the embodiement of *tangible computing* and *social computing* as practices as much material as discursive, meaning the embrication of physical and social reality as embodied interaction (Dourish, 2001). Thanks to *Information & Communication Technologies* the mediated manipulation of meanings becomes more immediate, *i.e.* creation and communication develop meanings through the interaction with the system and through the system. Moreover creating a norm (the best example here is *copyright*), broadcasting, *re-useing* and modifying it are themselves a *remix* of former creations. Such concept stays the same for the process of accumulation of knowledge, where control gets practiced through the development of finalities (Kelty, 2008) as political-ideological aura around objects, or other concepts.

If the ascription of the rights to a specific author is itself a *remix* process that fuses concrete and conceptual, legal and technical, social and cultural by a certain order of meaningful configuration, it is needed at this point to set upside down the problem and consider art work as part of a process of heterogeneous combination. Expansion and variability of knowledge and information can be considered at the heart of the matter as differences producing other differences (Bateson, 1972).

By the possible consequent simmetry between art work with *copyright* and *remix* is just a matter of different configurations meaning different processes of materialization socially shared and not blind ownership of somebody. Creativity cannot follow rules, but in case may break through them with the goal of innovating and progressing the meaning and the setting of mankind in the continuous production of materialization of reality. *Panta rei, panta remix*.

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